India, certain parameters reflecting the efficiency of Foreign Banks in terms of operations and operating cost for the year ended March 2006 *vis-a-vis* all Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) are furnished below:-

| Item | Foreign Banks 2005-06 (%) | All SCBs 2005-06 (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio | 13.00 | 12.40 |
| Gross NPAs as % to Gross Advances | 1.9 | 3.3 |
| Net NPAs as % to Net Advances | 0.8 | 1.2 |
| Net Profit to total assets | 1.50 | 0.88 |
| Operating profit to total assets | 3.30 | 2.03 |
| Cost Income Ratio | 46.1 | 51.5 |

To facilitate quick and efficient decision-making in public sector banks and enable them to complete internationally, Government announced an Autonomy Package for these banks in February 2005. Further, the Government has put in place a mechanism to monitor the performance of all Public Sector Banks on the basis of the 'Statement of Intent on Annual Goals' submitted by them on various performance parameters.

**Reduction of interest rates for Small Savings Fund**

2172. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have agreed to reduce interest rates for States borrowing from National Small Savings Fund, if so, the details of the decision taken in this regard,

(b) the extent to which the interest rate is less as compared to bank rates and rates of other sectors alongwith the reasons for the reduced rate of interest; and

(c) whether this would also affect the availability of liquidity for depositors, if so, the details of the steps to address the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (c) The rates of interest for State

Government borrowings from National Small Savings Fund have remained unchanged at 9.5% since 1.4.2003. Similarly, the rates of interest on small savings schemes have remained unchanged with effect from 1.3.2003. As such, there has been no adverse impact on depositors.

**Pending applications for issue of PAN cards**

2173. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of applications pending for issue of PAN card;

(b) what is the time normally taken to issue PAN card;

(c) whether it is a fact that applications as old as 1998 are still pending for issue of PAN cards, if so, the reasons therefore; and

(d) what action Government have taken to clear the backlog?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) As on 30.11.2006, 1,74,857 applications were pending for issue of PAN cards.

(b) PAN card is issue normally within 15 days of receipt of application. From 01.04.2005 to 30.11.2006, PAN cards were dispatched within stipulated period. Delay beyond 15 days arises mainly due to defective/ incomplete applications.

(c) and (d) Before outsourcing the work relating to allotment of PAN, the Income-tax Department had directed its officers to allot PAN in all cases where complete applications had been received. However, persons who were allotted PAN before 1.7.2003 but did not receive the PAN card are required to apply to the service provider for obtaining the PAN card.

**FDI in Insurance Sector**

2174. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since taken any decision in regard to the increase of Foreign Investment in Insurance from 26 percent to 49 percent;